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# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## LACE.

### PART II.

BY MRS. PALLISER.



THE art of making lace upon the pillow was first introduced into Germany by Barbara Etterlein, of Nuremberg parents, who removed to the mining district of the Hartz Mountains. Here she married a rich master miner, Christopher Uttman, of Annaberg. Observing that the girls were mostly employed in weaving net caps for the miners to confine their hair, Barbara, who had learned the art of lace-making from a Brabant refugee, introduced the pillow, and taught them to make a plain lace ground, whence she proceeded to set up a workshop at Annaberg, and began to make lace of various patterns. Thence the art spread over Germany. Barbara Uttman died at Annaberg, and on her tomb is inscribed "Here lies Barbara Uttman, died 14 Jan. 1575, whose invention of lace in the year 1561, made her the benefactress of the Hartz Mountains." This branch of industry, in which above 60,000 people were employed at the beginning of the present century, has greatly declined in the mountain district of the Erzgebirge, both on the Saxon and Bohemian sides, the peasants only making the coarse "torchon" lace. Machine-made lace has quite supplanted the hand-made, but great efforts have been lately made to revive the industry.

Lace-making is supposed to have been introduced into Denmark by Queen Elizabeth, sister of the Emperor Charles V, and wife of Christian II, but it has never been established as a manufacture except at Tonder, in North Schleswig, whence lace was

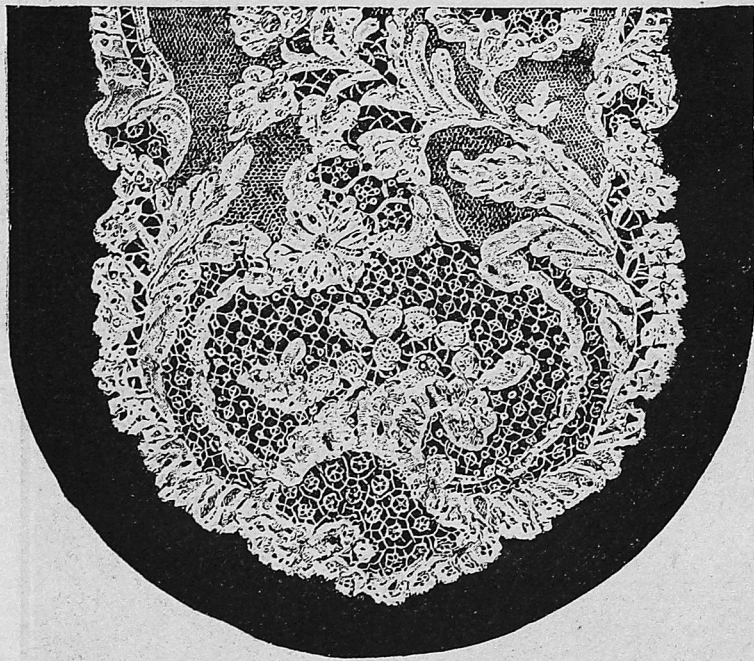


FIG. 6—LAPPET, POINT D'ALENÇON; EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

distributed over Scandinavia by "lace post-men," as they were called. The old Tonder laces imitate the fabric of the Netherlands, while the more modern were copied from the French, but the art has nearly died out.

The only manufacture of lace in Sweden is at the convent of Wadstena, founded by St. Bridget, and its products are carried to every part of the country by "colporteurs," or hawkers.

Much lace is made by the peasantry for their own use. The weaving of coarse pillow lace is the favorite occupation of the women of Scania, and in Dalecarlia the same patterns are used as were fabricated in other parts of Europe two centuries back. No improvement takes place in the designs, as the Dalecarlian women make only for their own consumption. The making of "Holesom," or cutwork, is a favorite occupation of the women in Sweden.

There is no established lace manufactory in Russia. The peasants bring their lace for sale to St. Petersburg. It is all of a coarse texture, the patterns of the same oriental character, and mostly used for church purposes.

France is the special country for lace. More is worn there than in all the rest of the world put together, and, of the lace-makers throughout Europe, one-half are estimated as belonging to France alone. The only needle-made lace is that of Alençon and Argentan, both towns in the department of the Orne. The principal pillow-made are those of Valenciennes, Lille and Arras, with the various laces of Normandy, Auvergne and Lorraine. Point d'Alençon is the only French lace not made on the pillow,

except point d'Argentan, a fabric which of late years has been confounded with that of Alençon. The manufacture of Alençon was established by Colbert, the minister who gave the first impulse to the lace industry of France. He sent to Venice for lace-workers, and placed them in his own chateau near Alençon.

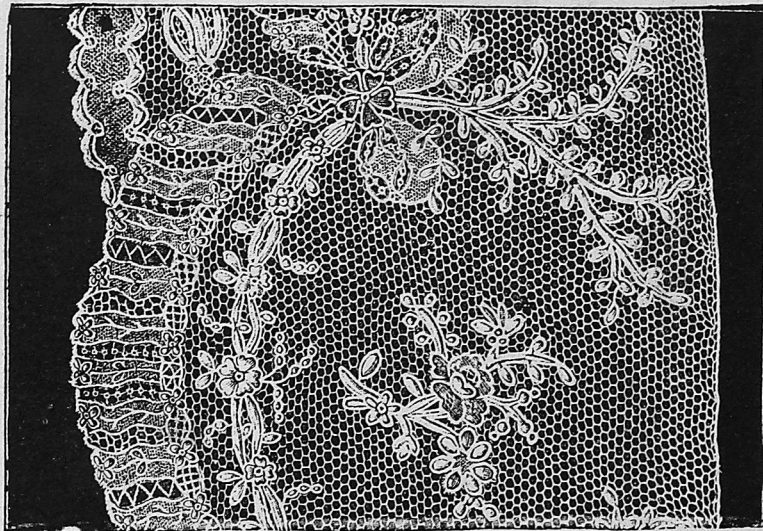


FIG. 7—POINT D'ARGENTAN; EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

But they could not succeed in teaching their French pupils to make the true Venetian stitches, so they struck into a new path, and invented a lace which was immediately adopted by Louis the XIV and his court. Alençon point is the most complicated and elaborate of all fabrics, being made entirely by hand, with a needle, on a parchment pattern, in small segments, each part executed by a different workwoman. So elaborate is its workmanship, that a piece of lace formerly passed through 18 different hands before it was completed; the number is now reduced to 12.

The lace is thus made. The pattern is printed off on pieces of green parchment, about ten inches long, each segment numbered in its order; the pattern is then pricked through upon the parchment, which is next stitched to a piece of coarse linen folded double. The outline of the pattern is traced out by two threads fixed by small stitches, passed with another thread and needle through the parchment and its linen lining. When the outline is finished, the piece is given over to another worker to make the ground, which is worked backwards and forwards at right angles to the border. The flowers are next worked in; then follow the "modes" or "fillings," and other different operations. When completed, the threads which unite lace, parchment and linen together, are cut by passing a razor between the folds of the linen, and there remains only the great work of uniting the different segments together. This process devolves upon the head of the fabric, and is effected by the stitch called "assemblage;" by us termed "fine joining." Point D'Alençon is the only lace in which horse hair is introduced along the edge, to give firmness and consistency to the "cordonnet."

From the labor expended in producing it, point d'Alençon is the most costly of all laces. Fabulous are the sums that were

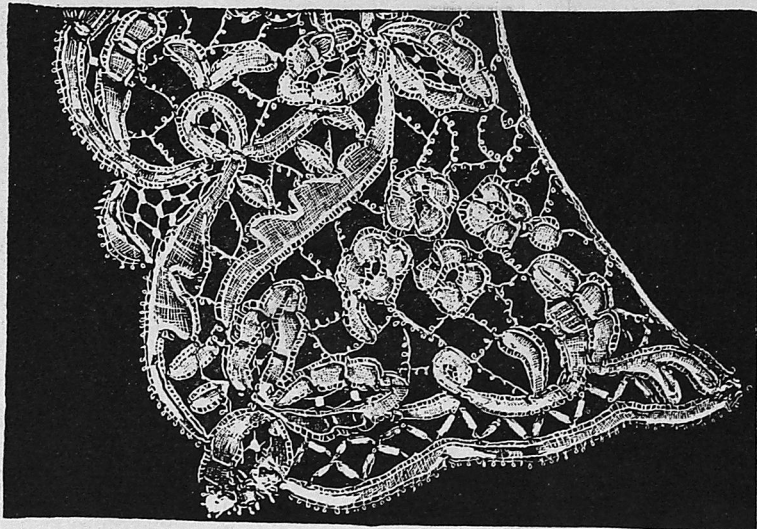


FIG. 8—HONITON; MODERN.

lavished upon it in the last century, and a wedding order will even now sometimes amount to \$30,000.

Argentan, near Alençon, in the department of the Orne, is celebrated for its needle-made lace, established about the same



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time as Alencon, but, though often mistaken for such, there is an essential difference between the two fabrics, both in the flower and the ground. The flowers are heavier and more compact in point d'Argentan, retaining more of their Venetian character. The ground is of most elaborate workmanship, consisting of large hexagonal meshes, each side of which is worked over with the button-hole stitch, giving it extraordinary strength and solidity. The pattern is most effective on this clear, large meshed ground, which is called "bride." Point d'Argentan perished with the French revolution, and all attempts to rediscover the manner of making it have proved unsuccessful. For many years its existence was forgotten, and it was held to be a coarse variety of point d'Alencon.

Valenciennes lace dates from the 15th century. It flourished under Louis the XIV, reached its climax from 1725 to 1780, and fell with the monarchy, every effort to revive the manufacture having failed. The transfer of this industry to Belgium is a great commercial loss to France, as more is consumed of Valenciennes lace than of any other. Valenciennes lace is made entirely on the pillow, the same thread being used for both pat-

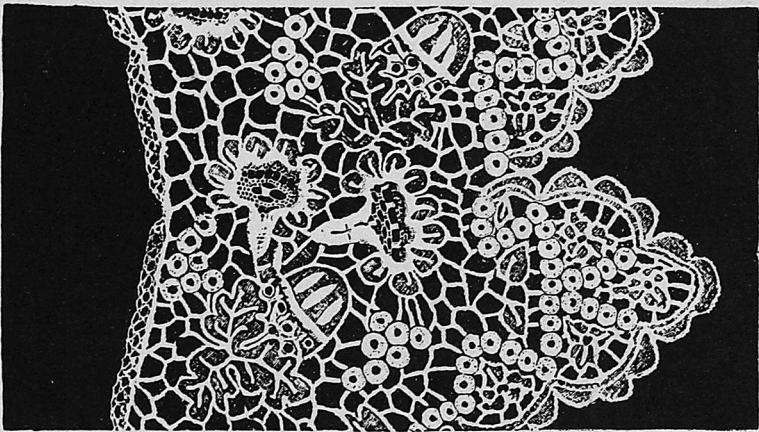


FIG. 9—IRISH POINT; MODERN.

tern and ground. In the ground all six sides of the mesh are plaited, which renders it the strongest and most durable of laces. Hence it was styled "eternal Valenciennes." So great was the labor of making it, that where a Lille lace-maker could produce three to five ells a day, a Valenciennes worker could not accomplish more than an inch and a half. It took two months, working fifteen hours a day, to complete a pair of ruffles. Valenciennes lace was therefore very costly. The city-made lace alone was called "real Valenciennes," (*vraie Valenciennes*), and was remarkable for the beauty of its ground, the richness of its design, and the evenness of its tissues.

Lille lace equals in antiquity the laces of the Netherlands, of which country, Lille, as Valenciennes, was anciently a part. The special excellence of Lille lace is its single ground; the finest, lightest and most transparent known. Instead of the sides of the meshes being plaited, either partly, as in Brussels, or wholly, as in Valenciennes, four of the sides are formed by twisting two threads round each other, and the remaining two sides of the simple crossing of the threads over each other. A thick thread marks the pattern. The edges of the old Lille lace are generally straight. The black was much worn for mantles, but it is now no longer made, and little is produced of the white. The lace of Arras resembles that of Lille in workmanship.

Chantilly, in the department of Oise, is the centre of a district long celebrated for its black and white silk laces, a manufacture established in the 17th century by the Duchesse de Longueville. The flower and ground are of the same silk. Its productions being exclusively for the use of the higher classes, the lace-makers were, many of them victims of the revolution. Under the first empire, blonde lace again became worn, and Chantilly recovering its prosperity, exported extensively to Spain and her American colonies, mantillas, scarfs, and other large pieces, in the making of which she had no competitor. Later, she has had to contend with the fabrics of Normandy, and her manufacture has succumbed in the contest. Chantilly at present fabricates none; she has been supplanted by the productions of Calvados, which are simple in material, and in the mode of fabrication.

With the exception of the Valenciennes-making town of Bailleul, the lace industry of France is now concentrated in the provinces of Normandy, Auvergne and Lorraine. Alencon continues her world-wide celebrated point, which Bayeux now also makes. The Valenciennes and black lace manufacture extends from Cherbourg to Dieppe, and the last occupied the whole department of Calvados, for the white blondes of Caen have now yielded to machine-made imitations, though from the absence of brilliancy in the "grenadine" silk it is often called "black thread." Machine-made lace of low price is often made of black

cotton, but never hand-made. The black lace, identical with Chantilly, has its centre at Bayeux, which town has arrived in its product at the highest point of artistic excellence. It is entirely made of silk.

Auvergne is one of the most ancient sites of the lace manufacture in France, and employs almost the whole female population. It produces every kind of lace, black and white, thread, cotton, silk, poil de chevre, and woolen, the white thread like the old Lille and Arras. It formerly exported largely to Spain and its colonies. Le Puy and Craponne, established in 1836, are the principal places of manufacture.

The introduction of pillow lace-making into England is assigned to the Netherlands, who fled from the persecutions of Alva and sought an asylum in that country. The two great centres of lace-making are Buckinghamshire and Honiton in Devonshire.

The laces of Buckinghamshire and the adjacent counties of Bedfordshire and Northampton are celebrated for the clearness and beauty of their "point" grounds, rivaling those of Lille, whose patterns they copied; hence these laces have been called "English Lille." The principal branch of the trade was the making of those narrow laces specially employed for trimming infants' caps, called in the country where they are made "baby lace," but the discontinuance of the wearing of caps by infants, and the increase of machine made lace have caused the demand for these laces to decline, and the lace-makers have given up their Lille grounds and make Cluny and Maltese lace.

The lace manufacture of Devonshire extends along the sea-coast from Seaton by Beer, Brandscombe and Sidmouth, to Exmouth, including the vale of Honiton which is in its chief centre. The Honiton lace resembles the Brussels in manufacture. The old ground was beautifully fine and regular, made of thread procured at Antwerp, where its market price in 1790 was \$350 the lb., as high as \$500 having been paid for it to smugglers during the war; and the lace-makers would receive as much as \$450 the yard for making the ground of border lace not two inches wide. But it is to its sprigs that Honiton owes its great reputation. They are made separately on the pillow, and like those of Brussels were at first worked in and afterwards "applied" or sewn on the ground.

Honiton lace was very costly; a veil would be worth five hundred dollars. Honiton workers still retain their celebrity for the excellence of their work, but the style is altered, and the

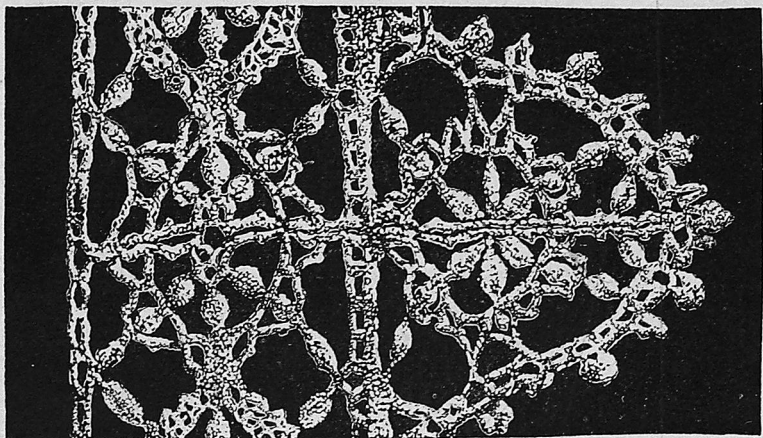


FIG. 10—GENOESE POINT; SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

fine ground and delicate sprigs which made them famous have been replaced by the modern "guipure."

### BOHEMIAN GLASS.



RODOLPH II., Emperor of Germany, and King of Bohemia, who detested the cares of royalty, but could not make up his mind altogether to renounce them, devoted most of his retired life at Prague to artistic pursuits, and after having purchased a collection of masterpieces in every branch of art, succeeded in attracting to the town a number of artists, to whom he intrusted many important commissions.

Among these were some Italians skilled in the art of cutting crystal, as is proved by the numerous specimens of their skill preserved at Vienna. But after his death they fell upon evil days. The Emperor Matthias fixed his residence at Vienna, and some years later the Thirty Years' War completely ruined their art. Crystal went entirely out of fashion, and the cutters of it